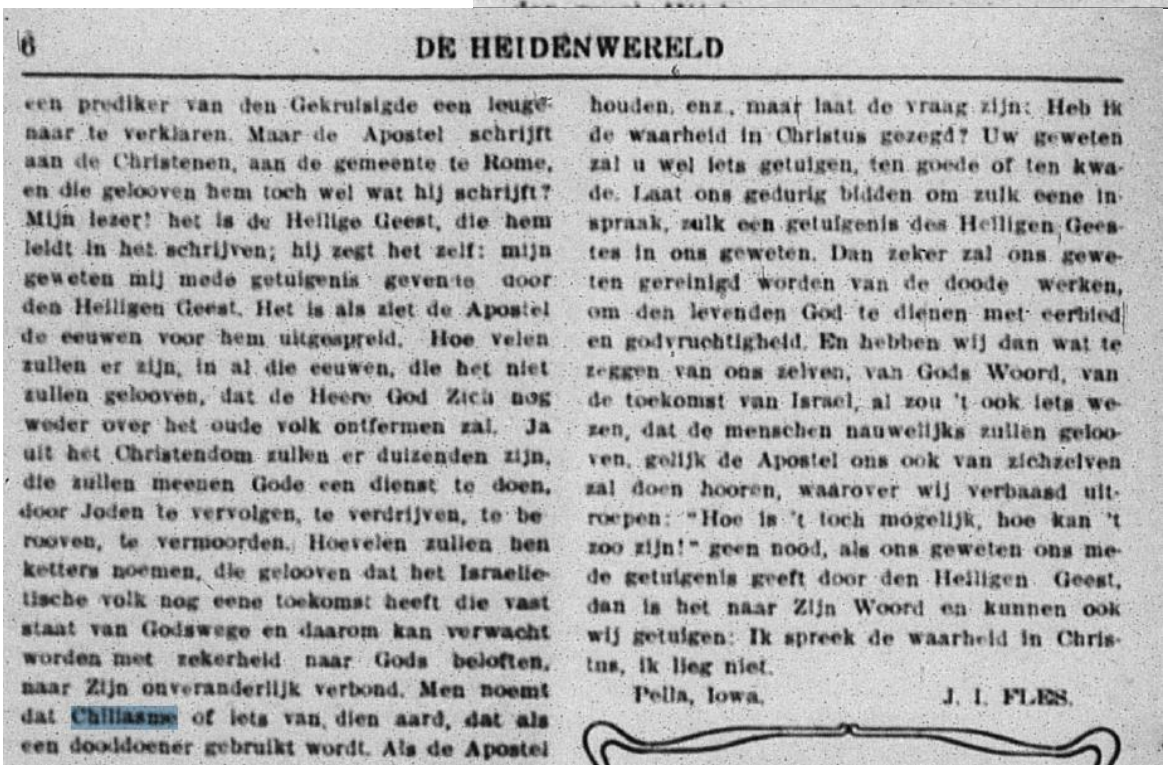
Rev. Fles's monthly column on the CRC denominational Mission to Jews in July, 1912
from pages 1055-1056 of 2596 in the 1908-1918 (second) digitized De Heidenwereld pdf.

ENWERELD 5

DE JODEN.

DE LIEFDE VAN DEN APOSTEL PAULUS TOT ISRAEL. ROM. 9:1—5.

Men noemt Paulus den Apostel der Heidenen, en hij is het ook; zie Gal. 2:9. Dat meent echter niet, dat hij de Joden zou vergeten. Want waar hij kwam zocht hij gelegenheid om aan de Joden het Evangelie te verkondigen, ja hij zocht eerst de Synagoge op, om daar, indien mogelijk, het werk te beginnen. "Beginnende van Jeruzalem," dat woord, dat bevel van Christus was hem altijd helder voor



6 DE HEIDENWERELD

een prediker van den Gekruisigde een leugenaar te verklaren. Maar de Apostel schrijft aan de Christenen, aan de gemeente te Rome, en die gelooven hem toch wel wat hij schrijft? Mijn lezer! het is de Heilige Geest, die hem leidt in het schrijven; hij zegt het zelf: mijn geweten mij mede getuigenis geven te door den Heiligen Geest. Het is als ziet de Apostel de eeuwen voor hem uitgespreid. Hoe velen zullen er zijn, in al die eeuwen, die het niet zullen gelooven, dat de Heere God Zich nog weder over het oude volk ontfermen zal. Ja uit het Christendom zullen er duizenden zijn, die zullen meenen Gode een dienst te doen, door Joden te vervolgen, te verdrijven, te berooven, te vermoorden. Hoevelen zullen hen ketters noemen, die gelooven dat het Israelietische volk nog eene toekomst heeft die vast staat van Godswege en daarom kan verwacht worden met zekerheid naar Gods beloften, naar Zijn onveranderlijk verbond. Men noemt dat Chiliasme of iets van dien aard, dat als een dooddoener gebruikt wordt. Als de Apostel houden, enz., maar laat de vraag zijn: Heb ik de waarheid in Christus gezegd? Uw geweten zal u wel iets getuigen, ten goede of ten kwade. Laat ons gedurig bidden om zulk eene inspraak, zulk een getuigenis des Heiligen Geestes in ons geweten. Dan zeker zal ons geweten gereinigd worden van de doode werken, om den levenden God te dienen met eerbied en godvruchtigheid. En hebben wij dan wat te zeggen van ons zelven, van Gods Woord, van de toekomst van Israel, al zou 't ook iets wezen, dat de menschen nauwelijks zullen gelooven, gelijk de Apostel ons ook van zichzelven zal doen hooren, waarover wij verbaasd uitroepen: "Hoe is 't toch mogelijk, hoe kan 't zoo zijn!" geen nood, als ons geweten ons mede getuigenis geeft door den Heiligen Geest, dan is het naar Zijn Woord en kunnen ook wij getuigen: Ik spreek de waarheid in Christus, ik lieg niet.

Pella, Iowa. J. I. FLES.

"Paul is called the Apostle of the Gentiles, and so he is; see Galatians 2:9.
However, this does not mean that he forgot the Jews.

For wherever he went, he sought opportunities
to preach the Gospel to the Jews, indeed, he first
sought out the synagogue, in order to begin the work there, if possible.
"Beginning from Jerusalem," that word, that command of Christ, was always clear to him.
He understood that the Lord's command did not only refer to the city of Jerusalem,
but to the Jewish people in general.

He was related to that people, he was attached to that people, he cared so much for that people, as we see and wish to hear in the verses given above.

In the eight preceding chapters he has presented the doctrine of salvation. The deeply corrupted state of the entire human race, Jew and Gentile, the greatness of God's grace for the salvation of sinners according to God's eternal, sovereign good pleasure, he has clearly shown. And the Christian, who is in Christ through faith, can and may boast in the love of Christ, in the love of God, from which no creature can separate him.

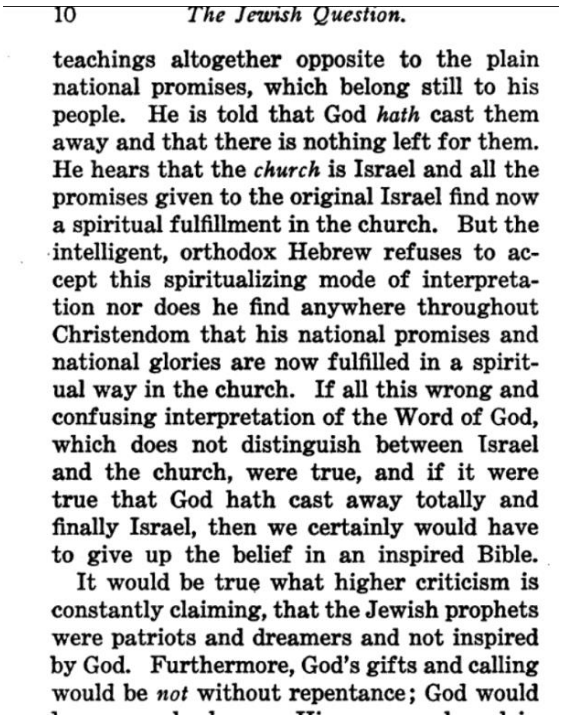
But now he begins in this 9th chapter to speak about the Jewish people, about the relationship of that people to God and their present condition and their **future**, about **which he does not want the Church to remain ignorant.**
It is well worth noting how the Apostle, when he begins this,
adopts a completely different tone than in what precedes.
Hear it: "I speak the truth in Christ." I am not lying,
my conscience bearing witness with me through the Holy Spirit.
You might say: But Paul! Who accuses you of not telling the truth in Christ? Who would dare to say to you: You are speaking falsehoods, or outright Are you lying? Unbelievable! Surely no one would be so bold. No, not in such a way that someone would say to him so directly to his face: 'You are lying.' ..."

"... But the Apostle writes to the Christians, to the congregation in Rome, and they surely believe what he writes, don't they?
My reader! It is the Holy Spirit who guides him in writing;
[Paul] says it himself: my conscience bearing witness with me through the Holy Spirit.

It is as if the Apostle sees the centuries spread out before him. How many will there be, in all those centuries, who will not believe that the Lord God will once again have mercy on the ancient people? Yes, from Christianity there will be thousands, who will think they are doing God a service by persecuting, expelling, robbing, and murdering Jews.

[Rev. Fles sounded as rough as A. Gaebelein did, also in 1912, in his *The Jewish Question*.
See image of the Rausch source, p. 247. Gaebelein's book asked, "What becomes of our national promises and blessings" if "the *church* is Israel" in a "spiritual fulfillment." See chapter 1, quotes from p. 4 and p. 10.

More from Gaebelein's book shows how similar he was to Rev. Fles:


10 *The Jewish Question.*

teachings altogether opposite to the plain national promises, which belong still to his people. He is told that God *hath* cast them away and that there is nothing left for them. He hears that the *church* is Israel and all the promises given to the original Israel find now a spiritual fulfillment in the church. But the intelligent, orthodox Hebrew refuses to accept this spiritualizing mode of interpretation nor does he find anywhere throughout Christendom that his national promises and national glories are now fulfilled in a spiritual way in the church. If all this wrong and confusing interpretation of the Word of God, which does not distinguish between Israel and the church, were true, and if it were true that God hath cast away totally and finally Israel, then we certainly would have to give up the belief in an inspired Bible.

It would be true what higher criticism is constantly claiming, that the Jewish prophets were patriots and dreamers and not inspired by God. Furthermore, God's gifts and calling would be *not* without repentance; God would

I am looking for proof that Fles and Gaebelein (a "proto-fundamentalist," per Rausch) may have known each other; Gaebelein went to a "landmark" 1914 Chicago Hebrew Mission prophecy conference at Moody's church. If you want to read more about other prophecy conferences, The Prophecy Conference Movement, published 1988, edited by D. Dayton et. al. is available from the Internet Archive, and I've excerpted its very nice introduction/summary of the subject too.
The CRC's 1914 Synod in Roseland, IL, "... it is decided: 'Since there is a fairly large balance in the treasury of the Deputies for Jewish Missions, a gift of $1,000.00 shall be given to the Chicago Hebrew Mission.'"]

How many [Christians] will call them heretics who believe that the Israelite people still have a future: which is firmly established by God and therefore can be expected with certainty according to God's promises, according to His unchangeable covenant.
This is called **Chiliasm** or something of that kind, which is used as a catchphrase.

When the Apostle says: I speak the truth in Christ, he means that everything he preaches and writes is connected with Christ, relates to Him, to His mediatorial work, to His glory, to His honor.
The future of Israel, of the Church, of the earth and heaven belongs to Christ, is His work, and will be completed by Him.
Therefore also that powerful statement:
I do not lie. Lying is the work of the devil, he is the father of lies.
Lying is turning the truth upside down, so that it changes into a lie.
I don't do that, says Paul. No one should lie, but especially the preacher of the Gospel must be careful. He must always speak and preach the truth, as it is in Christ.
And that means the whole truth, the entire Word of God; he must never go against the Word **or make it something other than what God has said and willed**.

If he does that, then he is not speaking the truth in Christ, then he is not seeking the glory of Christ, then he has himself or something else as his goal. Paul had his conscience with him, and with his conscience the testimony of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit therefore gives His inspiration in the conscience with the assurance that what Paul says, preaches, and writes

is fully according to His Word, according to His will. How glorious is such a testimony, such inspiration!
Reader, when you say, preach, or write something, let the most important thing not be whether it is flawlessly written, or whether you have stuck to your point, etc., but let the question be: Have I spoken the truth [waarheid] in Christ? ”

The next three of Rev. Fles’s monthly columns – through October, 1912 – were also on ROM. 9:1-5. Then his next column (or fifth from that chapter), page 1182 was on Rom. 9:25-33, **is not included** here (in order to keep this document readable). Finally, there is another section from this chapter on page 1220, but the passage on Romans 9: 9-13 seems to be out of sequence? Page 1078 of 2596 went this way (screenshot image below);

DE JODEN.

DE LIEFDE VAN DEN APOSTEL PAULUS TOT ISRAEL. ROM. 9:1—5.

Maar wat zegt de Apostel dan nu, dat volkomen waarheid is, waarin hij niet liegt? Hoor het: Dat het mij een groote droefheid en mijn hart een gedurige smart is. Om deze woorden recht te verstaan moeten wij bedenken, dat de Apostel het Israelietische volk voor den geest heeft. Hij ziet hun arbeid, hun moeite, hunne eigengerechtige werken, om daarop hunne hoop voor de eeuwigheid te bouwen. Hij ziet hun ongeloof en verharding aangaande den Christus en Zijn Evangelie; hunne blindheid om bij het lezen der woorden Gods door Mozes en de profeten gesproken en geschreven, te zien in den grooten Hoogepriester ons geschonken; hunne onwilligheid en onverschilligheid om met ernst te onderzoeken en na te speuren, alles wat van Hem geschreven en hoe heerlijk het in en door Hem vervuld geworden is. En zoo weet Paulus, dat zij met hunne ingebeelde gerechtigheid voor eeuwig bedrogen zullen worden en verloren gaan. De Apostel is er verre van af om te leeren, — gelijk er, helaas, in onzen tijd zijn, — dat het zoo ongeveer hetzelfde is, wat men al of niet gelooft, als men het maar goed meent. Neen, neen, zegt hij, het is mij een groote droefheid. Is het niet ontzettend, zoo vele menschen te zien heengaan met een ingebeelden hemel en aan het einde in bittere teleurstelling voor eeuwig verloren? Beseft gij het eenigszins: een volk

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But what does the Apostle say now, that is complete truth, in which he does not lie?
Hear it: That it is a great sorrow to me and a constant pain in my heart.
To understand these words correctly, we must remember that the Apostle has the Israelite people in mind.
He sees their labor, their toil, their self-righteous works, on which they build their hope for eternity.

He sees their unbelief and hardening concerning Christ and His Gospel: their blindness when reading the words of God spoken and written by Moses and the prophets, the great High Priest given to us: their unwillingness and indifference to seriously investigate and search everything that has been written about Him and how gloriously it has been fulfilled in and through Him.

And so Paul knows that with their imagined righteousness they will be eternally deceived and lost. The Apostle is far from teaching – as, alas, there are some in our time – that it is more or less the same what one believes or not, as long as one means well. No, no, he says, it is a great sorrow to me. Isn't it terrible to see so many people going away with an imagined heaven and at the end, in bitter disappointment, eternally lost? Do you understand it at all: **a people called to the wedding feast**, despising the messengers, playfully plunging into the abyss: children of the Kingdom cast out? For surely there is no salvation, no blessedness outside of Christ?

They know so well what they think of themselves
and of their work and labor for Jehovah.
Oh, they expect to receive so much in the future
life. How far above all other nations they will stand.
How richly they will be rewarded and crowned and
sit as the foremost guests in Heaven, with
Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the greatest glory.
How terrible it will be to be excluded by the
righteous Judge and banished to outer darkness,
where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.
Oh, says the Apostle, it is a constant,
continuous, persistent sorrow to my heart.
It causes me anguish of soul, I suffer for their sake.

Reader, do you also have something of that feeling of sorrow,
that feeling of pain for others who surround you, of whom you cannot
believe otherwise than that they are going to be lost forever?
Is it truly a sorrow to you and a
constant pain to your heart? Oh, teachers and all you
workers in the Lord's vineyard, do you
have something, do you have much of the Apostle's love in
your heart for your people? No. I don't ask first
about the Jews, but about the people to whom you
belong. Nor first about the Gentiles, but
about the people among whom you work, with whom
you associate, to whom you speak. **Are not
thousands [of them] misled and deceived by all sorts of
false teachings?** And you, have you ever
admonished them with tears? Oh no, one doesn't
hear about that anymore, one now brings the
modern... Well-intentioned, firm advice: If you don't feel otherwise,
then you have not yet truly experienced sorrow. If you have never yet admonished with tears,
then you have also never prayed for them with a moved heart. **What will become of you,
O watchmen, when the judgment comes?** Ezekiel 3:17-21, Acts 20:31.

For I myself would wish to be banished from Christ for my brethren, who are my kinsmen according to the flesh, thus the Apostle continues to testify. Here we encounter a measure of overflowing love that almost goes beyond our reach. This is no longer the everyday love that every Christian, every servant of Christ called by the Lord, carries within himself.

But isn't it as if we hear something friendly in this, something from sublime glory?
Moses, the man of God, also experienced such a moment when he spoke to Jehovah:

"Now then, if You will forgive their sin: but if not, then blot me out of Your book which You have written." Exodus 12:22.
Moses, the mediator of the Old Covenant, stood as an intercessor for the people before Jehovah's face to turn His wrath away from them and obtained his request.
Paul wished that he could save them with his own life. Christ gave His life for His enemies to save them. Paul would gladly give his life, if he could save his enemies through it. Christ bore the Anathema, the curse of God for us and became a curse, or accursed. Anathema, in our place.

Thus, Paul wished to save his brothers, his kinsmen according to the flesh; he is truly a follower of Christ in this as well. The love of Christ is profound and compels us, he said elsewhere.
Well, we see it in such words as are heard here in verse 3.

My children, let us love one another, for love is from God, says the Apostle John.
And love must be heard in words, it must be seen in deeds. Giving ourselves for others. It is a great thing.

It is quite different from giving a little money from our abundance. It is impossible for our nature.
We would give ourselves for those who hate us! Only through the grace and power of the Holy Spirit is it possible.
And then we can also feel sorrow and grief for those who are still hostile to the Gospel, to the Christ of God.
Pella, Iowa, J. J. FLES.

Page 1097 was in September (presented with no screenshot image here);
DE LIEFDE VAN PAULUS TOT ISRAEL

Now the Apostle will let us hear whom he means by the words: "those who are my kinsmen according to the flesh."
These are very significant words, well worth serious consideration.
No fewer than a number of titles are bestowed upon them by Paul.
Let us read them and try to see what meaning they have.
First, the Apostle says: "Who are Israelites."
Well, why doesn't he say: "who are Jews"?
He wants them to retain that precious, honorable name, given to them by Jehovah.
You know, reader, that Jacob wrestled with a man, with the Angel, with Israel's God and King Himself at Peniel, and that he prevailed with weeping and supplication. Gen. 33:24-30.
Then the Lord gave Jacob the name Israel, because he had behaved princely with God and with men and had prevailed, had overcome. This name Israel means: Prince with God. What a name! And that name also passed on to his descendants.
And let us consider that this name has not been taken back, has not been revoked.
Although someone has said somewhere that in the New Testament the name Israel is only meant for believers: certainly not [true] here.
For then Paul would surely not have wished to be banished from Christ for their sake.
He would not have done that either. The assertion: only the believers are referred to in the New Testament by the name Israel, is merely a scholarly error.
Scholars also make mistakes sometimes.
So the Apostle says: They are Israelites, Princes with God.
Oh, when he sees their zeal for the ceremonies, he calls out to them:
"I too was formerly a zealous follower of the ancestral institutions, just as you all are." Acts 22:3. He possesses that noble character, that blood that can become warm, that can boil, when their opinion, their religion, is attacked. Many within Christendom remain indifferent to the attacks on the Bible, and to the undermining of the Bible, [the] Church and Christianity. They try **to compromise, to explain, to interpret**, until it can still somehow be accepted, even if it's not entirely clear.
Not so the Israelite: he holds fast and defends with might and main what he believes,

and adds nothing foreign [“niets vreemds” likely means no strange impurities] to it.

And when he is brought to faith in Christ,
then he is also an Israelite: full of fire and zeal for
his Savior, his King. A prince who is willing to
suffer and fight for his King and, like
Paul himself, would rather fall as a brave knight
on the battlefield than be unfaithful to his King.
That's what Israelites are. And now **one can call believers**
Israelites in a figurative sense, if one chooses, but
then that being an Israelite is only in name, it's not in their blood;
if they bear the name of children of Zion, it is because
they have been **grafted into Israel**. Israelites are
and remain the only descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Secondly, the Apostle asks: What is the
adoption as children? To whom does that adoption apply?
What adoption would the Apostle mean here?
Surely he has in mind what he will explain further in the 11th chapter,
namely their adoption, which will be life from the dead. Romans 11:15.
Of this adoption the prophets have foretold that they will be His sons and
His daughters. Jehovah will be their God, and they will be His people.
Say to your brothers Ammi and to your sisters Ruchama, that is, my people,
they [had] mercy. Hosea 1:12, 2:20. Yes, Isaiah and Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel
and all the prophets have testified of this adoption.
Certainly, it has already begun. For every time an Israelite is led to Christ Jesus
through the Gospel, that adoption is fulfilled in his person. But the time will come
when **that promise will be fulfilled for all of Israel**, for the entire nation, when they will
see Him whom they have pierced and they will mourn over Him because they rejected
Him, their Messiah. **But then their adoption will also be so glorious. Believing in Him,**
worshipping Him, illuminated by the light of the Holy Spirit, they will confess Him,
and Israel will call out to all unbelievers of every kind and name: It is true, it is true: Jesus
of Nazareth is the King of Israel! Let everything that has breath praise the Lord! Hallelujah!
Reader, do you also long for that adoption into sonship for the ancient people?
Can you even begin to comprehend that this will be life from the dead?

In the **third** place, Paul mentions: "Theirs is the glory." He means the Israelites.
We would almost be inclined to ask: But Paul, aren't you going a little too far with that people?
He would answer: No, because everything I say is said by God, promised by Him, and you know
that the God of Israel is the God of truth, who cannot lie. Would He say and not do?
Would He speak and not make it happen? Reader, you know what glory the Almighty has bestowed
upon that people from of old. From the beginning of Abraham's calling, throughout all the ages,
even during the times of the greatest oppression, God's watchful eye, His wondrous guidance,
was with and over them.
In Egypt, in the Red Sea, near Sinai, in the desert.
It was all glorious: in the cloud by day
and in the pillar of fire by night, in the tabernacle,
in which He appeared and filled it with the
cloud of glory. Continue on, to
the Jordan, to Solomon's temple, everything
testifies to God's glory. His footsteps
resound not only in the tabernacle

and temple, but in the entire history of Israel.
"Your beauty was perfect through My glory,
which I had bestowed upon you,"
thus He spoke to His people, Ezekiel 16:14.
"The glory belongs to them," the Apostle rightly says.

But, note well, He does not say: "The glory belonged to them in former times, but those times are now forever past. That [time] is done and will not return."
Oh, I believe many seem to read it that way.
That is not the Apostle's intention. He speaks of what is now, what still exists and will be in full splendor. To Israel, glory is promised, such as has never yet been.

They are God's chosen people, God's priests, His witnesses.
People want to convert the world by
Christianizing it. Good intentions, but [one]
which will not be fulfilled. The Gospel is proclaimed as a testimony to all nations.
The firstfruits are gathered from Jews and Gentiles; it is the Bride,
the Wife of the Lamb.
Then follows the harvest of the nations, in which each of the
princes will bow down, all of heathenism will give praise
to the Son of David. For this purpose He will
use Israel to proclaim His Name, His fame and His honor everywhere.
Then, so many acts of favor... The Blessed Heathenism
To praise the happiness of this King,
Who ascended David's throne.
Blessed be God, that eternal Being,
Clothed with might.
The Lord, praised in Israel,
Performs wonders. He alone.
His name shall receive eternal honor.
Let Him be praised early and late;
Let the world hear and follow my songs
With Amen, Amen!

That month ended with a full page on Neander. I am not sure who wrote it, but Rev. Fles has mentioned him.

JOHANN NEANDER

(Uit De Hope Israels.)

Door zijne vrome joodsche ouders werd Johann Neander opgevoed in diepen eerbied voor God en voor de Heilige Schriften. Met grooten ernst sprak hij het morgen- en avondgebed uit, en vaak dacht hij na over de belijdenis: "Wegens onze zonden zijn wij uit het land verdreven." Menigmaal heeft hij op den Grooten Verzoendag met zijne ouders tranen gestort bij het belijden zijner zonden. Dikwijls was z jn hart vol vrees voor God, en dan was het eenige wat hem geleerd was te doen: nog meer en nog vuriger te bidden, om daardoor vergeving te verdienen.

doet afstand van z'n voorrechten als jood, scheurt zich los van het verbond, dat God met Abraham en Zijn volk gemaakt heeft, en sluit zich aan bij de Gojim (niet-joden), die leven zonder God en zonder hoop Al bleef hij echter uitwendig een jood, zijn hart was verre van God, en zelf moest hij verklaren, dat hij gelijk was aan "de lieden, die van de wereld zijn, wier deel in dit leven is."

Later is hij weer ernstiger en godsdienstiger geworden. De dood zijner moeder, die hij hartelijk had liefgehad, en eene krankheid die over hem kwam, werkten daartoe mede. Hij begon één dag in de week te vasten, vele gebeden op te zeggen, en aan de armen liefdadigheid te bewijzen. Toch vond hij in dit alles geen rust, en in de benauwdheid zijns harten smeekte hij: "O God, ik heb niemand die mij helpt, en ik durf tot U niet naderen, want ik ben schuldig. Help, o help mij, om mijns vaders Abrahams wil, die bereid was om zijn zoon Izaak te offe-

And the next column was on page 1117 (screenshot image below);

DE JODEN.

DE LIEFDE VAN PAULUS TOT ISRAEL.

Rom. 9:1—5.

Een drietal eeretitels hebben wij gezien, welke de Apostel aan Israel toekent. Zij zijn Israelieten, hunner is de aanneming tot kinderen, hunner is de heerlijkheid. Is er nog meer? Ja, er is. Hoor maar, wat de Apostel zegt: En de verbonden, zegt hij. Dat is, de verbonden zijn met hen opgericht. Gij kunt niet van het verbond der genade reppen, of gij komt terstond, tenminste al heel spoedig tot den stamvader van het oude volk, tot Abraham. Ik richt mijn verbond op met u en met uw zaad, om u te zijn tot een God en uw zaad na u, luidt het woord des Eeuwigen. Nu nemen wij aan, en gelooven, dat hierin alle geloovigen begrepen zijn, en dat de Heidenen zijn mede erfgenamen van dezelfde genade en daarom ook mede tot ons en onze kinderen gesproken. Maar dat neemt niet weg, dat het immer een heilrijk verbond blijft met Abraham en zijn zaad, en des eeds aan Izak en Zijn woord aan Jakob en aan gansch Israel toegezeid tot Zijn verbond in eeuwigheid.

Maar de Apostel spreekt van verbonden. Zijn er nog meer? Zeker. Hèt verbond bij Sinai met Israel gemaakt. Zie Deut. 5:1—4. Ook in de velden Moabs maakte de Heere een verbond met hen; zie Deut. 29:1—15. Met David den man naar Gods harte maakte

wijzen, lang vóór hem. En al de volkeren, wij weten het, ook Nederland en Amerika hebben hun eigen wetgeving. En ieder roemt de zijne als de beste ook, als 't meest overeenkomende met Christendom, Godsdienst en Bijbel. Maar dat alles moet bij Israel ver achterstaan. Hier is God-Zelf, de eeuwige Schepper aller dingen, de Wetgever. Hij sprak met eene hoorbare, met eene menschenstem uit den hemel. En aan Mozes, Zijnen knecht, gaf Hij-Zelf de wetten. Onder ontzaglijke teekenen der natuur kwam Hij tot Zijn volk. En al was ook Mozes in die wetgeving als een middelaar tusschen Jehovah en het volk, het blijft zonder tegenspraak waarheid: De Heere, Jehovah, is onze Wetgever, gelijk de profeet Jesaja zegt, Jes. 33:22. En David zingt zoo vroolijk:

Hij gaf aan Jakob Zijne wetten,
Deed Israel op Zijn woorden letten,
En leerde ze in Zijn wegen wand'len;
Zoo wou Hij met geen volken hand'len.
Die moesten Zijn getuigenissen,
En Zijns verbonds geheimen missen.
Laat dan Gods lof ten hemel rijzen,
Laat al wat adem heeft Hem prijzen.

En Mozes wil dat Israel zulk eene groote zaak zal blijven gedenken. Want zij is geschied niet om Israels voortreffelijkheid boven andere volken, maar enkel uit vrije liefde, uit vrije genade. Deut. 4:31—37.

De Apostel heeft echter nog meer, Hunner is de dienst, zegt hij. Welke dienst? De dienst Gods. Israels Godsdienst was geen beredeneerd stelsel van wijzen, die met elkander hadden overlegd, gewikt en gewogen en naar hun beste weten besloten om — na eenigen

We have seen three titles of honor that the Apostle attributes to Israel.
They are Israelites, theirs is the adoption into sonship, theirs is the glory.
Is there anything more?

Yes, there is. Just listen to what the Apostle says: And the covenants, he says. That is, the

covenants were established with them. You cannot
speak of the covenant of grace without
immediately, or at least very soon, coming
to the patriarch of the old people, to Abraham.
"I [shall] establish my covenant with you and with
your seed, to be a God to you and your seed
after you," says the word of the Eternal One. Now we
assume and believe that all believers are included in this,
and that the Gentiles are also co-heirs of the same grace and
therefore also spoken to us and our children. But that does not negate
that it was always a salutary covenant with Abraham and his seed,
and the oath to Isaac and His word to Jacob
and to all Israel given as His covenant forever.
But the Apostle speaks of covenants.
Are there any more? Certainly. The covenant
made at Sinai with Israel. See Deut. 5:1-4.
Also in the plains of Moab the Lord made
a covenant with them; see Deut. 29:1-15.
With David, the man after God's own heart, the Lord made
a covenant that He would raise up the Messiah from him.
What a lot of effort the Lord, the Almighty, has made with that people!
They should certainly acknowledge: "He has not done so with any other nation!"
We will not discuss the meaning of the covenants any further now.
For then we would have to point to heaven and earth, sun, moon and stars as witnesses
of Jehovah's covenants with Israel, of everything He has promised and will fulfill, from Genesis 15
to Leviticus 26:42-45 and Deuteronomy 32:43 and Jeremiah 21:35-37 and 33:19-22. Enough.
The covenants are theirs, and Jehovah bound Himself to His word.
And is this legislation (or the making of laws and covenants) also an honor for Israel?
Yes, certainly, and a very great one.
Every nation has its own legislation.
he pointed to it, long before him. And all the nations, we
know it, including the Netherlands and America, have
their own legislation. And everyone praises their own
as the best, as the one most in accordance with Christianity, Religion and the Bible.
But all that must take a back seat to Israel.
Here is God Himself, the eternal Creator of all things, the Lawgiver.
He spoke with an audible, with a human voice from heaven. And to Moses, His servant,
He Himself gave the laws. Under awe-inspiring signs (or laws) of nature,
He came to His people. And even though
Moses was a mediator in that legislation, what more could be said?
Between Jehovah and the people, the truth remains without contradiction:
The Lord, Jehovah, is our Lawgiver, as the prophet Isaiah
says, Isaiah 33:22. And David sings so joyfully:

He gave to Jacob His laws, He made Israel heed His words,
And taught them to walk in His ways;
He did not deal with other nations in this way.
They had to miss His testimonies, and the secrets of His covenant.
Let then God's praise rise to heaven,
Let all that has breath praise Him.

And Moses wants Israel to remember such a great thing.

For it never happened because of Israel's superiority over other nations,
but solely out of free love, out of free grace. Deuteronomy 4:31-37.
The Apostle, however, has even more to say: "Theirs is the service," he says.
Which service? The service of God. Israel's religion was not a system
devised by wise men who had consulted with each other, weighed and considered,
and decided according to their best knowledge to change or revoke it after some time.
It was the revelation of God. The Law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul;
the testimony of the Lord is sure, giving wisdom to the simple (ignorant).
All the ceremonies and rituals, all the statutes and
ordinances were from God in religion and society
and in all civil life, down to the smallest details, were from God Himself.
He spoke in and through them, so that they might serve Him,
worship Him alone, and expect their salvation from Him alone
for this life and for the life to come.
He was their God. Their life, their refuge, and the Rock of their salvation:
they were His people and the sheep of His pasture,
and He was their Shepherd.

And to them, says the Apostle, belong the promises. Well, are there then
no promises except [those] for the Jews? The promises go first to Israel,
and see how the Apostles viewed this.
Read carefully, Acts 2:39, Acts 3:25,26, Acts 13:16.
In this same letter to the Romans, Paul emphatically says: First to the Jew.
To them were given the promises of the coming of the Messiah, the great Redeemer,
the calling of the Gentiles, [and] their restoration. There are still many promises
given to the Jewish nation which are still unfulfilled, but **which will all be completely fulfilled**.
And in the present time, the Almighty is working towards their fulfillment.
The attention of the world is drawn to Jerusalem, to Palestine.
Jews are moving there and becoming landowners and farmers.
The Lord works everything in His own time. To them belong the promises. (‘de beloftenissen’)
Pella, IA. FLES.

I’ve indicated, but not specifically noted, that the emphasis in many of these issues was on the two Reformed denominations’ missions to the Islamic world. I don’t really expect to read an attempt to analyze whether the Gospel message may have changed at all, depending on which countries it was meant for. It is hard to find the answer for historical times, but Dexter Van Zile brought the topic up in his 2013 article, “Evangelical Anti-Zionism as an Adaptive Response to Shifts in American Cultural Attitudes.” (I couldn’t read the following, and haven’t looked much at the missions magazine’s articles to ...)

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